

PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST WHOOPING COUGH

WHAT IS WHOOPING COUGH?

Whooping cough – also called pertussis – is an **extremely contagious** infection of the respiratory tract caused by the bacteria *Bordetella pertussis*. Sporadic outbreaks have been reported. Although it resembles an ordinary cold at first, whooping cough can turn more serious.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE WHOOPING COUGH?

You may be ill with pertussis if you have had coughing lasting more than 2 weeks with any of the following:

- ▶ Heavy bouts of coughing (coughing attacks)
- ▶ A high-pitched “whoop” sound at the end of coughing attacks as you gasp for air
- ▶ Vomiting after a heavy bout of coughing

Although generally causing a mild or moderate disease among adults, pertussis can be fatal in the very young.

WHAT ABOUT VACCINATION?

- ▶ **You were vaccinated** against this disease as a child, but your immunity may have decreased over time
- ▶ An adult booster vaccination is available

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PROVIDER

WHAT ABOUT TREATMENT?

- ▶ Seek treatment if you experience coughing spells lasting longer than 2 weeks with any of the following: breathing in with a high pitch sound; heavy bouts of coughing; or vomiting after heavy coughing
- ▶ Antibiotics are available to treat the disease and prevent the spread of infection



- ▶ If ill with whooping cough, you are most contagious for 3 weeks after you have started coughing, unless treated; cough into your upper sleeve rather than your hands

HOW CAN I PREVENT SPREADING WHOOPING COUGH TO OTHERS?

If you have whooping cough or were exposed to someone who has whooping cough:

- ▶ Avoid contact with infants (less than 12 months old)
- ▶ Avoid contact with pregnant women
- ▶ If contact is unavoidable in the performance of your duties seek medical treatment to prevent the spread of infection



PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST THIS INFECTION!